

NICHOL TURK'S HEAD CACTUS
(*Echinocactus horizonthalonius* var. *nicholii*)

STATUS: Endangered (44 FR 61927, October 26, 1979) without critical habitat.

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: Stems are blue-green to yellowish-green, columnar, usually single, and about 46 cm (18 in) tall and 20 cm (8 in) in diameter. Spines are born on vertical, spiraling ridges along the stem. Each spine cluster has 3 central spines; one curves downward and is much shorter than the others, and the other two are red or pale gray and curve upward. There are five radial spines per spine cluster. Flowers are pink-magenta and bloom from April to mid-May. Fruits are covered with wooly, white hairs.

HABITAT: Occurs in unshaded microsites within Sonoran desertscrub on dissected alluvial fans at the foot of limestone mountains and on inclined terraces and saddles on limestone mountainsides. Elevation ranges from 732-1250 m (2400 to 4100 ft).

RANGE: Current: Southwestern Pinal and north-central Pima counties. More precise locality information is not given here due to the threat of illegal collecting.

Potential: May occur on limestone in areas near the known populations.

REASONS FOR DECLINE / VULNERABILITY: The specialized habitat requirements, limited habitat, and abundance make this species vulnerable to threats. Threats include off-road vehicle use, other recreational uses of habitat, mining, and road construction.

LAND MANAGEMENT / OWNERSHIP: Bureau of Land Management, Tohono O'Odham Tribe, and private.

NOTES: Protected from international trade by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Also protected by the Arizona Native Plant Law.

Recovery Plan approved 1986. A copy of the recovery plan is available online at:
<http://arizonaes.fws.gov/Documents/RecoveryPlans/Navajo%20Sedge%20RP.pdf>

BLM approved Nichol Turk's Head Cactus Management Plan in 1986.

